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EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE
HIGH COMMISSIONER'S PROGRAMME

Fifty-second session

ACTION TAKEN ON DECISIONS AND CONCLUSIONS OF THE FIFTY-FIRST SESSION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The paragraphs quoted below are extracted from the report of the fifty-first session of the Executive Committee (A/AC.96/944). They are followed by a brief summary of information on the follow-up taken by UNHCR on the decisions/conclusions of that session. Action by governments or entities other than UNHCR is not reported on. In order to limit the length of the report, each section ends with reference to the relevant documents containing more detailed information on action taken.

II. DECISIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

Conclusion on international protection (A/AC.96/944, para. 23)

(a) *Welcomes* the proposal of UNHCR to commence a process of Global Consultations with States, with the close involvement, inter alia, of refugee protection experts, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and refugees, to revitalize the international protection regime and to discuss measures to ensure international protection for all who need it, while taking into account the legitimate concerns of States, host communities and the international community generally;

(b) *Affirms* in this context that such a process, on the eve of the 50th Anniversary of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees, offers important prospects for revitalizing refugee protection and promoting the effective implementation of the Convention and the

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Protocol, while at the same time identifying approaches to meet new situations not covered by these instruments;

(c) *Calls upon* UNHCR to report to the Executive Committee at its fifty-second session on progress made on this process.

UNHCR action:

An update on the Global Consultations on International Protection was provided to the Standing Committee at its twenty-first meeting. This provided details of preparations for the ministerial meeting of States Parties to the 1951 Convention/1967 Protocol ("first track"). It also gave details of the expert roundtables ("second track") and provided information on the various substantive meetings held within the Executive Committee process ("third track"). Other information contained in the update concerned the regional meetings that had taken place as well as arrangements for refugee participation in the Global Consultations process. The Standing Committee was also informed of follow-up to the first "third track" meeting.

The key objectives of the Global Consultations are defined in the Note on International Protection presented to the Executive Committee at its fifty-second Session. They are to:

- promote the progressive development of international law for the protection of refugees;
- universalize standards and avoid compartmentalization;
- ensure greater consistency and complementarity between human rights instruments and the Convention;
- implement the international refugee protection regime more effectively through better review, monitoring and technical assistance;
- strengthen supervision of the Convention by UNHCR;
- enhance international cooperation by sharing burdens and responsibilities;
- widen the stakeholders in the system.

The Note also recalls that the Global Consultations will culminate in a Ministerial Meeting on 12 December 2001, although the process as such will continue into mid-2002. The task will then be to take stock of progress made and consolidate this into an Agenda for International Protection, which will set the global protection policy framework to be built upon and operationalized in the years to come.

See: Update on Global Consultations on International Protection (EC/51/SC/CRP.12); Report on the twenty-first meeting of the Standing Committee (A/AC.96/956, Section V,A); Note on International Protection (A/AC.96/951, Section X,B); UNHCR's Annual Report (E/2001/46, Section I,C); Mid-Year Progress Report 2001, presented to the twenty-second meeting of the Standing Committee (pp. 18-19).

Conclusion on the CIS Conference follow-up (A/AC.96/944, para. 24)

(j) *Appreciates* the efforts made by the High Commissioner for Refugees, the International Organization for Migration, the Organization for Security

and Cooperation in Europe and the Council of Europe to support the follow-up process, to mobilize resources for this, and calls on them to strengthen their efforts and mutual cooperation;

(k) Urges the High Commissioner to continue to inform the public and further to enhance relationships with other key international actors, such as the European Commission and other human rights, development and financial institutions;

(n) Requests the High Commissioner to keep the Executive Committee informed of measures taken in the implementation of the recommendations and of the progress achieved on the issue of follow-up to the 1996 Geneva Conference.

UNHCR action:

As a result of the decision reached in the final session of the Steering Group (July 2000) on the "Follow-up to the 1996 Geneva Conference on the Problems of Refugees, Displaced Persons, Migration and Asylum Issues", the process is now focusing on four thematic areas: building asylum, migration and border management, NGO sector sustainability and partnership.

The new work plan started in 2001 has been implemented based on discussions and input from the lead agencies - UNHCR, IOM, OSCE and the Council of Europe - who agreed at a meeting in Vienna in July 2001 to fine-tune the modalities of their interaction, avoid overlap and enhance cooperation in the CIS region. Two meetings and sub-regional conferences have been scheduled on activities to ensure asylum safeguards in border management systems. Progress has been achieved on citizenship issues and efforts will be continued in the latter part of 2001 to assist States in Eastern Europe to accede to international conventions and develop adequate and effective asylum systems in compliance with international standards.

See: Mid-Year Progress Report 2001 (pp. 204 and 206); UNHCR's Annual Report (E/2001/46, Section II, D para. 79).

Decision on safety of staff of UNHCR and all other humanitarian personnel (A/AC.944, para. 25)

(f) Encourages UNHCR to further develop and integrate appropriate security arrangements in its operations and to allocate adequate resources for the safety and security of its staff and the populations under its care

UNHCR action:

In order to respond to the continuing challenges of staff safety in 2001, UNHCR has reviewed its security policies and provisions, and embarked on reinforcing existing provisions. This action has mainly included:

- Creation of additional posts at Headquarters and in the field (both international and local staff);
- Strengthening of training activities;
- Introduction of the Minimum Operational Security Standards (MOSS), a set of standards established by the joint UN system to allow staff to operate safely in high risk duty stations;

- Carrying-out of several staff security audits, inspections and assessment missions.

Following the decision of the United Nations General Assembly that the increased budgetary needs of UNSECOORD should be covered by the operational resources of the various United Nations agencies concerned, consensus on a cost-sharing formula, based on proposals submitted by the agencies, was reached at the meeting of the Task Force on Security of the High Level Committee on Management (HLCM) held in Geneva in September 2001.

See: Mid-Year Progress Report 2001 (p. 30); UNHCR Global Appeal 2001 (Add.1).

Decision on administrative, financial and programme matters
(A/AC.96/944, para. 26)

(d) *Requests* the High Commissioner, within the resources available, to respond flexibly and efficiently to the needs currently indicated under the Annual Programme Budget for the year 2001, and *authorizes* her, in the case of additional new emergency needs that cannot be met fully from the Operational Reserve, to issue Special Appeals and create Supplementary Programmes;

UNHCR action:

Information concerning programme and funding has been provided at each meeting of the Standing Committee since the Executive Committee's fifty-first Session. This has included details of supplementary activities, of which the most recent have included new or increased programmes with respect to needs in The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, assistance to internally displaced persons in Afghanistan and the Sierra Leone programme.

See: Updates on programme and funding for 2001 presented respectively to the twentieth, twenty-first and twenty-second meetings of the Standing Committee (EC/51/SC/CRP.9, CRP.14 and CRP.23); 2001 Mid-Year Progress Report.

(e) *Requests* the chair to convene, as soon as possible after the conclusion of the fifty-first session of the Executive Committee, a series of informal consultations in preparation for the 2002 budget, and with a view to enhancing the strategic budgeting process;

(f) *Requests* UNHCR to continue discussions with the Standing Committee on a regular basis on the prioritization and management of resources under the unified budget with a view to ensuring that core needs are met;

UNHCR action:

Several informal consultations took place for this purpose (13-14 November 2000, 8 May 2001). Strategic planning meetings also took place in Thailand and Zambia.

In addition, the Executive Committee was consulted in the framework of Actions 1, 2 and 3 launched by the High Commissioner and which also had implications for the budgeting process. A briefing took place with the High Commissioner at the twenty-first meeting of the Standing Committee.

See: Actions 1, 2, and 3: Exchange of correspondence between the High Commissioner and the Chairman of the Executive Committee (A/AC.96/950, Annex 5); Report of the twenty-first meeting of the Standing Committee (A/AC.96/956, Section VI).

(g) *Notes* the *Report of the Board of Auditors to the General Assembly on the Accounts of the Voluntary Funds administered by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for the year ended 31 December 1999* (A/AC.96/933), and the High Commissioner's *Follow-up Actions to the Board of Auditors Report* (A/AC.96/933/Add.1); as well as the *Report of the ACABQ on UNHCR's Annual Programme Budget for the year 2001* (A/AC.96/932), the *Report of the High Commissioner on the work of UNHCR's Inspection Activities* (A/AC.96/934) *and the Report on UNHCR's Evaluation Activities* (A/AC.96/935), and requests to be kept regularly informed on the measures taken to address the recommendations and the observations raised in these various oversight documents;

UNHCR action:

Information on action taken on measures to address these various recommendations and observations has been shared with the Standing Committee at its twenty-first and twenty-second meetings and is being presented to the fifty-second session of the Executive Committee. The relevant documents are listed below.

See: Report of the twenty-first and twenty-second meetings of the Standing Committee (A/AC.96/956 and A/AC.96/958); Follow-up on actions taken to implement the recommendations of the Board of Auditors in its report for the year ended 31 December 1999 (A/AC.96/949, pp. 25-31); Measures taken or proposed in response to the recommendations in the report of the Board of Auditors (A/AC/96/949/Add.1); Follow-up to ACABQ observations (A/AC.96/950, Annex 1); Report on Inspection Activities (A/AC.96/946); Report on Evaluation Activities (A/AC.96/947).

Decision on the Pledging Conference (A/AC.96/944, para. 27)

Recalling the decision of the Standing Committee at its eighteenth meeting in July 2000, proposing an alternative pledging arrangement designed to strengthen the dialogue between the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and donors on resource mobilization within the context of its unified programme budget;

Reaffirming in this context the need to link more closely the procedures relating to the adoption of UNHCR's annual programme budget, the issue of a Global Appeal and the funding mechanism;

(v) *Decides*, in order to improve and rationalize the funding mechanism following the adoption of the annual programme budget, that the ad hoc Committee of the General Assembly may be convened as from 2001 at Geneva, the Headquarters of UNHCR.

UNHCR action:

This decision was endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution A/RES/55/75. The Pledging Conference in New York in November 2000, and the subsequent launch of the Global Appeal in Geneva in December, provided UNHCR with 25 per cent of its requirements at the beginning of 2001 as compared to the 17 per cent available at the same time in 2000. This result justified expectations that the possibility of convening the Pledging Conference in Geneva in 2001 would have a positive impact on early and substantial pledges.

See: Mid-Year Progress Report 2001 (p. 9).

Decision on UNHCR's 50th anniversary and on World Refugee Day (A/AC.96/944, para. 28)

(viii) *Decides* that, as of 2001, the date of 20 June will be commemorated as "World Refugee Day".

UNHCR action:

This decision was endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution A/RES/55/76. In 2001, the 50th anniversary moved into its second phase with emphasis being placed on the first ever World Refugee Day (20 June), for which the key theme was "Respect", and a campaign commemorating the 50th anniversary of the signing of the 1951 Convention relating to the Status of Refugees (28 July). UNHCR recorded over 150 different events that took place in the context of World Refugee Day, often with positive local publicity.

See: Mid-Year Progress Report 2001 (p. 33).